SEVERAL

Short, but ſeaſonable Diſcourſes

Touching

COMMON and PRIVATE

PRAYER,

Relating to the Publick Offices of the

CHURCH.

By a Reverend Divine of the Church of England.

I will pray with the Spirit, and pray with the Underſtanding alſo. 2 *Cor.* 14. 15.

OXFORD,

Printed by *L. Lichfield*, Printer to the Univerſity, for *Richard Sherlock* Bookſeller.
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alfred Bull apr. 4, 1914

A CATALOGUE

Of all the following

DISCOURSES.

I. *Of the* Irregularity *of* Private Prayer, *&c.*

II. *Dr.* Stewards *Judgment &c.*

III. *Of the Difference betwixt* long *Prayers prohibited, and* continuance *of Prayers commanded.*

IV. *Meditations upon our going to the Church, with some short Directions for our Demeanour in the House of God, touching some too-much mistaken and neglected Acts of Divine Worship.*

V. *A* Sermon *preached upon the* Archbishop *of* YORK's *Provincial Visitation at* Warrington.

The

The IRREGULARITY Of a Private Prayer in a Publick Congregation.

SIR,

I Have ſent you herein my repeated and enlarged Thoughts, upon what was once the ſubject of our ſerious diſcourſe; wherein I would not at all diſparage, or in the leaſt undervalue the *private* prayers and devotions of any perſon, whether of the *Laity*, or *Clergy*; whether thoſe prayers be by *himſelf* compoſed, or by *others*; whether they be *premeditated*, or ſometimes *ejaculatory*; whether *fixed*, or *occaſional*; *oral*, or *mental*; for thus, and all theſe ways, every truly Religious Chriſtian prays, and undoubtedly finds the benefit, and

feels

feels the comfort of such holy breathings forth of his Soul unto Heaven in his private recesses.

But that any Person, especially such who have entred into holy Orders in this Church of *England*, should presume to use any Prayers in *Publick* of his own *private conception*, whether premeditate, or extemporary, before, or after his Sermon, other than those Prayers, which are by publick Authority allowed, and published to that end: I humbly conceive (with submission to my Superiors) to be unlawful in several respects.

First, *'Tis a disorder and confusion in the service of God:* For thus the *Publick* and *Private* Worship of God are confounded, whilst those *private Prayers*, which our Lord hath confined to the private Closet, do yet, contrary to his express command appear in *publick*, and usurp the place of his publick Service in the Congregation. The holy duties of *publick* and *private* Prayers, as they

are

are distinct in their own nature, and constant use, so they are distinguished by our Lord, and distinct rules prescribed for the distinct and discreet performance of either Duty. First, for *private Prayers* Mat. 6. 6. *When thou prayest, enter into thy Closet,* —speaking in the singular number to every particular person. *Secondly*, for *publick Prayer*, v. 7. *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions,* —speaking in the plural number to many assembled together: where, to avoid the Heathenish practice of much speaking, or multitudinous words in Prayer, v. 8. a short and most excellent Form is given us. *v.* 9. Thus then *publick* prayer being distinguished by our Lord from *private*, we are thereby forbidden to confound them in their use and practice: 1 *Cor.* 14. 40. *Let all things be done decently, and in order*; not prepostorously and disorderly, one part of divine worship undermining another, and the lesser and more particular uty usurping upon the greater

and

and more general religious Office.

Secondly, 'Tis not only a *disorderly*, but also an *unreasonable Service*; and so not likely to be acceptable to him, who is both the God of Order, and of Wisdom. And the unreasonableness of this *private* prayer in *publick*, will appear, by considering, That all prayers offer'd up unto God in publick, must be publickly known, consented unto, and agreed upon (which the *private* prayer generally is not) by all them that joyn therein. Upon which agreement (and not otherwise) Christ hath promised his presence, *viz.* to hear our Prayers, and grant our requests. *Mat.* 18. 19. 20. *Again, I say unto you, If two of you shall agree upon Earth, touching any thing they shall ask, it shall be done unto them of my Father, which is in Heaven: for where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst of them*: whereupon saith the Gloss out of *Origen*, *This is the cause we are not heard when we pray, in that we*

agree

agree not in all things. —*For as in Musick there must be harmony and agreement of voices, or else it delights not the hearer; so in the Church, an assent and agreement is necessary, or else God is not pleased, neither will he hear the voice of our prayers.* This this *agreement* in prayer that denominates our publick worship of God *Common Prayer*, because agreed upon by *common* consent; which doth presuppose, that 'tis known to all, that all may joyn therein: So it was ever in the Church of Christ, the faithful knew what they prayed for; and this, not at the second hand, from the mouth of the Minister, but before they joyned with him. So Saint *Chrysostome*, *Hom. 6. in Tim. You that are faithful know, what things are to be desired in Prayer, because all Prayer*, viz. *that is in publick, ought to be common.* 'Tis the exhortation of *Ignatius*, *Ep. ad Magn.* who lived in the times of the Apostles, and saw our Lord in the flesh, *That we assemble together in one place, and use one*

prayer common to all: For if the prayers of a Congregation be not known, common, and agreed upon, then

First, the people cannot joyn therein, it being little leſs *than the ſacrifice of fools*, for men to ask of God they know not what, but wholly depend upon the Miniſters unknown expreſſions.

Secondly, A Prayer, that is unknown before it be offered up, is to an Engliſh man, though ſpoken in *Engliſh*, as a Latin prayer to him who underſtands no *Latin*, for they are both lame and maimed, and cannot ſtand with common ſenſe, except they make uſe of that Crutch, which we ſo much blame in the Papiſts, viz. *an implicite faith* to ſupport them; and both the one and the other do equally tranſgreſs that rule of prayer preſcribed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 14. 15. *I will pray with the ſpirit, and will pray with the underſtanding alſo.*

Third-

Thirdly, *It is against both the Judgment and practice of the Universal Church of Christ*: no footsteps thereof are to be found in Antiquity, but many Canons of the Church against it, whereof some are noted in the Margin. [a]

[a] *Concil. Ledic. cel. Anno* 320. *Can.* 15. 17. & *ult. Concil. Milevit.* 2d. *An.* 416. *Can.* 12. *Concil. Epaunens. celeb. An.* 509. *Concil. Gerund. celeb. An.* 516. *C.* 1. *Concil. Toles. quart. Can.* 2. *Concil. Venet. celeb. An.* 452. *Can.* 15. *Concil. Bracar.* 1. *celeb. An.* 562. 19. & 20. & 22. *Concil. Vasen. celeb.* 442. *Can.* 5, 6, & 7.

Fourthly, *Tis a transgression of the Laws and Orders of this particular Church of England*, and this accompanied with the breach of that solemn promise, which every Minister, lawfully ordained, hath made; no man being admitted into holy Orders, untill he hath attested the *lawfulness of the Book of Common Prayer, and promised that he himself will use the same and no other in publick*,

ſubſcribing with his own hand this attestation and promiſe: ſo that the contrary practice in the uſe of any *private* prayer by any Miniſter of this Church, is a breach of *Fidelity* to the Church, and to the Reverend *Biſhop* that Ordained him.

Fifthly, *Tis alſo a tranſgreſſion of the Common Law of the Land*, which in the Acts of Parliament for Uniformity in Common-prayer, both old and new, enjoyns peremptorily, under ſevere penalties, *That no man ſhall uſe any prayers openly* or in publick, *but ſuch as are ſet forth in the ſaid book*: ſo that both in this and in the former reſpects tis an act of Diſobedience to the higher Powers, and breach of the fifth Commandment.

I might adde, in the laſt place, the Non-conformity of this practice with all other Proteſtant Communicants beyond the Seas, their Miniſters being neither fond of it themſelves, nor permitted ſuch a liberty by their Governors.

Object.

Object. But to solve all these particulars, 'tis said, A *private* prayer before Sermon is allowed, nay enjoyned by the 55*th.* Canon of the Church, which is called indeed a *Form of Prayer*, but therein the Minister is not bound up to the use of the same words, but may pray *to that effect.*

Answ. First. But surely there is no man, that understandeth sense, and is not blinded with prejudice, will say, That the form prescribed in the Canons is a *Form* of prayer, but an *Exhortation* only to move the people to joyn in prayer *for Christ's Holy Catholick Church, for the King's Majesty, for*——— and 'tis most properly called a *bidding of Prayer.* And 'twas Mr. *Cartwright*, that Ring-leader of the Puritan Faction, in the time of Q. *Elizabeth*, who first turned this Bidding prayer into a long prayer of his own head; and 'twas the very Engine, whereby he and his followers undermined the Common Prayers of the Church.

Secondly,

Secondly, Because the observance of this Canon was obnoxious to the censure and exceptions of many, who desired an absolute Prayer in stead of that *bidding* Form, it was proposed at the Convocation held *An.* 1640. that it might be so ordered, and accordingly there was a short Prayer drawn up, comprising all the heads of the Canon; the which, notwithstanding the confidence some had of its universal reception, was rejected by the most Reverend Archbishop, who judged it neither safe nor fitting to alter that Canon, which was founded on the Injunctions of *Queen Elizabeth*, and *King Edward* the Sixth, at the first Reformation; which sufficiently evinceth the said Canon to be no Prayer, nor yet lawfully to be altered, and used *Prayer-wise*.

Thirdly, *'Tis a presumptuous usurpation and affront upon the Church of Christ*, for any man to thrust himself upon such a Ministerial Office, as he is not by the Authority of the Church intrusted with-

all.

all, and whosoever acts the *Presbyterian* in this particular, becomes *Independant*; the one having no more just Authority derived from the Church that ordained him, to use such a private Prayer of his own in *publick*, than the other hath either to preach or pray in publick, being not admitted into holy Orders, nor lawfully called thereunto.

Fourthly, *Tis an Innovation in Religion*, a new up start practice, brought into the Church not above 70 years ago, and may therefore be reckoned *inter profanas vocum novitates*, which the Apostle admonished to *avoid*, *even all profane and vain babblings*, 1 Tim. 6. 20. canting language, *new words*, and *new ways*, such as are contrary to those *old paths*, and those *good ways*, which the Lord commands us *to enquire after*, *and to walk therein*. Jer. 16. 16. And such *New ways* are firly called profane, *quasi procul à fano*, saith the Commentator, *Lyra in loc.* because far from the Temple, or different from the words and

ways

ways of Christ's Church, and contrary to the Apostles *Depositum tene*, in the following words, *hold fast that which is committed to thee*, 1 Tim. 6. *i. e.* saith the Fathers *quod tibi creditum, non quod à te inventum*: what the Church, whereby thou art admitted to the Ministerial Function, hath committed to thy trust, and commanded thee to observe, hold fast that, keep close to that, not following thine own fancy and invention to bring in what is New, which ever undermines the Old and true way of Divine worship.

Fifthly, *If a Call or command from God be herein pretended, though not allowed by the Church, yet in this particular they are at a loss*, except they pretend immediate Revelation with the Enthusiasts; for there is neither command, nor example in holy Writ to justifie this Private prayer in Publick. We have many Sermons of the Apostles upon record, but no Prayer before any of them, so that this is an act of usurpation

tion, upon the Publick Divine Worſhip, a preſumption to do that which God hath no where commanded, nor the Church of Chriſt allowed.

Sixthly, Liberty being permitted for any perſon of what perſwaſion ſoever to vent his private conceptions by way of *Prayer* in publick, *opens a gap to Hereſy and Schiſm in the Church; to Sedition and Rebellion in the Kingdom.* For their private errors and deſigns being inſerted in their prayers, do inſinuate into the Affections, and more mightily inflame the *People*, than by any other way of perſwaſion whatſoever; Old Truths being undermined by New ways of Worſhip, and vain bablings, the conſtant Parents of errors in the Faith. 1 *Tim.* 6. 20, 21.

Seventhly, *Thus Separations and Diviſions, both amongſt Miniſters and People, are bred and nouriſhed*: for whilſt one Miniſter (or gifted man (as ſuch are called) prays thus, and thus, and and another in a way, and with words

divers from him: one ſort and ſect of men likes this mans way, method, and language, tone and geſture; another ſort is taken more with anothers way. —Hence, *One ſaith, I am of Paul's and another, I am of Apollo: and another, I of Cephas*, 1 Cor. 1.12. which is the life and being of Schiſm: the remedy whereof is to obey that moſt pathetical exhortation, *Now I beſeech you Brethren, by the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, That there be no diviſions among you.* 1 *Cor.* 1.10. To ſpeak the ſame thing, and to uſe the ſame words in the publick worſhip of God: or, as the ſame Apoſtle, *to glorifie God with one mind, and with one mouth*, is the way to avoid diviſions, and to take off the people from their partiality and fondneſs, in prefetring one Miniſter before another, merely for their leſs or more eminencies in this unwarrantable way of praying.

Eighthly, *By this Private prayer, the Pub-*

Publick prayers of the Church are implied to be imperfect and deficient; are slighted, nay contemned, and undermined. For they, with whom this way is in repute, generally slight, and slubber over the *Common prayer* carelesly, irreverently, and indevoutly; but to their own conceived prayers give all the advantages of seeming zeal, both in their tone and language, elevation of eyes, hands,— and no marvel then that the one be so much applauded by the vulgar, and the other slighted; especially when they are perswaded by these Enthusiasts, that Common-prayer, and all the Ceremonies in that celebration, are taken out of the Mass-book; that they are but a dead letter, and the invention of man; whereas the *private, conceived* Prayer, is no less than the immediate influence of the holy Spirit of God.

Object. At least they say, That Prayers read in a Book have not that quickning vigour in them, like to the prayer *memoriter*, and without book; the one

savours of the deadness of the Letter, the other of the quickning Spirit.

Answ. But in holy prayer it is not the words said, whether *written*, or *not written*, whether said *within*, or *without* book; but the affectionate Zeal of him that prays. That gives vigor and efficacy to this holy Duty; and where this is wanting, the fault is not in the Prayers themselves, but in the persons, that profanely slight and undervalue them: the deadness they talk of, lies in their own hearts, which are not touched with the quickning spirit of devotion, in the use of those holy and good prayers. And whosoever is more affected with a conceived than a written prayer, thinks sure, that the one is more immediately by inspiration from Heaven than the *other*, and so smels strong of the Heresie of Enthusiasm; I am sure, to speak foolishly and impertinently, hath been usually accounted, and called

Orationis sublimitas ex parte orantis, non ex sublimitate vel subtilitate verborum, sed humilitate & de-

called *speaking without Book.* *votionis affectu ejus qui orat pensanda est.* Jac. Alvar. de inquis. pac.

Object. 3. There be many Episcopal persons, and such who both use and are zealous for the Liturgy of the Church, do yet use *private* prayer of their own before Sermon; the which surely they would never do, if they conceived it unlawful.

Answ. This is done, tis confest, by many persons of known worth and integrity; some with good intentions, to win upon such persons, whom no other kind of prayers will please; some that their private prayer may be a Pattern, whereby their people may learn to pray in private: and for these reasons, I conceive, this practice hath been, and is still overlook'd by Ecclesiastical Superiors. But in the general, this custom is continued through inadvertency, in not considering, and deeply weighing the *equity* or *iniquity*, *fitness* or *unfitness* thereof; nor can the practice

ctice of this, or any other cuſtom prove the ſame to be lawful. There is a great difference betwixt a cuſtom founded upon the principles of truth and equity, and ſuch a cuſtom as is contrary hereunto, how plauſible ſoever. Many perſons alſo that are eminent in knowledge, and piety, in the general, may, through long cuſtom, and many examples, fail in ſome particulars through inconſideration.

Verſat nos & præcipitat traditus per manus error, alieniſque perimus exemplis: ſanabimur, ſi modo ſeparemur à cœtu. Seneca de vita beata.

Object. 4. Tis obſervable by experience, that variety of expreſſions, and change of Forms in prayer, do more work upon the Affections of the People, and ſtir up their Devotions, than one and the ſame conſtant ſtanding Form.

Anſw. 1. This doth more tickle the itching ears of the people indeed; and the itching of the ears comes from the corruption of the heart: And ſurely

their

their devotion is very cold, that must be warmed by variety of expressions; the which in preaching may be commendable, but not in praying, except by way of private ejaculations, it being one great design of Exhortations, and moving admonitions in Sermons, to excite their Affections to what is taught, and exhorted unto: whereas holy Prayer is not the cause, but the effect and issue of devout Affections; and tis then only acceptable unto God, when it comes from a heart replete with humility, compunction, fervor, and Divine love, which do necessarily infer foreknowledge of the Prayers we use, that they be such, as whereby our devout Affections may be expressed.

Answ. 2. It is generally observed by the Masters of Mystical Theology, and Spiritual Life, that there is a *sensible Devotion*, which begins in the sensitive Nature, producing tenderness of spirit, drawing often sighs from the bosome, and tears from the eyes, and begets

gets a ſecret delectation and ſweetneſs in the ſoul; with which many perſons are much taken and tranſported, as conceiving ſuch pleaſing delights in Prayer to be no other than the influences of the holy Spirit of God. And yet this exterior pleaſure of a ſenſible Devotion is not always a ſign of a * ſound and right temper of holineſs in the ſoul: Becauſe, *Firſt*, many wicked irregenerate perſons may, and have enjoyed the ſame. *Secondly*, it may proceed from the natural temper. *Thirdly*, from the vehement intention of the mind. *Fourthly*, from the mournful tone, cadence of words, and power of language. And ſuch ſenſible delights, even in Prayer, are ſometimes the inſinuations and illuſions of the Evil ſpirit, to puff up the ſoul with *ſelf-love*, *vain-glory*, *preſumption in Gods favour*,

* *Jac. Alba. de inquiſ. pac. lib. 2. par. 3. cap. 3. Sanct. Soph. Tract. 3. ſerm. 2. c. 5.*

and

and contempt of others. I deny not but such sensible consolations are often the influences of the holy and true Spirit, given us for our encouragement in holy and divine Offices, in the love of God and obedience. But there is great discretion and humility also required in the use we make of them; neither are we over-highly to esteem of them (as the Casuist * observes.) *Because they are neither true virtues, neither are they necessary instruments of proficiency in true devotion: for without such sensible consolations, many holy persons have ascended to a great height of virtue, and purity of mind.*

The strongest Devotions, and most effectual Prayers, are seldomest atten-

* *Consolationes sensibiles quamvis non sunt despicienda, non sunt tamen supra modum aestimandae: quia nec verae virtutes, nec solidarum virtutum effectus, nec necessaria perfectus instrumenta, sine quibus plurimi ad magnam virtutem, ac mentis puritatem ascendunt.* Sic Alv. ibid.

ded with these sensible consolations, and sweetnesses, which flow in upon variety of taking expressions; for a great Devotion is like a great Grief, which is not so expressive in words, as a less moderate passion: a lesser Grief also is wasted away by tears and complaints, whilst the greater is both more silent, and more lasting; so the less and more weak devotion of the Soul is breathed out and wasted in variety of language, but not the solid, strong, and lasting fervor. Such was the prevailing devotion of *Moses*, when he *fell down before the Lord*, Deut. 9.18.25. and that of *Hannah*, when she *prayed in the Temple*, 1 Sam. 1.10, 11. Their words in their prayers were few, and low, unheard: but their desires and affections strong and prevalent, as being not wasted by much speaking. And such was that Devotion of our Lord in the Garden, and on the Cross, when he poured out his Soul in prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears: *Heb.*

5.

5. 7. His words were few, but his devotion great, and prevailing mightily; which devotion was neither begotten, nor increased, nor poured forth in a flood of language, and various expressions, *for he went away* (saith the holy Ghost) *and prayed, saying the same words. Mat.* 26. 44. So that settled and stinted Forms of Prayer may be expressive enough of the greatest Devotion; nor is God more pleased, or the Soul that prayeth more profited by variety of expressions, though the exterior pleasure of a sensible devotion may be raised thereby.

Object. 5. But stinted forms of Prayer cannot suit with all tempers and conditions: a Garment may as well be made to fit the changeable Moon, as one Form of Prayer to fit all men, or any one man at all times.

Answ. 1. Tis true, that limited forms of Prayer cannot be fitted to every

man's fancie and affection, especially amongst such men where such prayers are either suspected, or coldly entertained: but they may be fitted to all mens *necessities*, though not to their *curiosities*; they may be such as may sufficiently serve every mans *duty*, though not please all mens *fancies*.

Answ. 2. Though they suit not with every man's particular *condition* in all circumstances, tis no argument against them; for that would conclude against all Laws whatsoever, wherein tis impossible to make provision for all particular circumstances and accidents that occur: tis sufficient, that all Publick Sanctions do secure the publick Interest, and whatsoever hath influence upon publick Societies and Communities of men.

Answ. 3. Every man's private Condition, wherein he may be separate from the publick, is to be fitted by his private

private prayers; and therein he hath liberty to expatiate himself, and enjoy all those fancied benefits, and self-pleasing sweetnesses, which variety and liberty can afford him; that which cannot be expected in publick prayers, which are of a publick nature and design, suiting with publick interests, the duties, and conditions of all Christians; and providing also for publick Events, that are either probable, or can be rationally foreseen.

Answ. 4. There are many Circumstances relating to particular mens businesses, that are not fit to be inserted in the publick Service of the Church, or to be mentioned in *publick*. It is more safe and prudent to recommend many things unto God in general expressions, than to insist particularly and positively upon them, especially in such things as are temporal and worldly, wherein men are more apt to be positive, and expressive than becometh.

eth. Our blessed Saviour knew well enough the particular wants and conditions of his Disciples, when they begg'd of him to be taught to pray; yet he descends not to any enumeration of those particulars, but gives them a Form of Prayer in general terms, because it was for a publick use and benefit.

Answ. 5. If any defects and inconveniences be fancied in those devout and accurate prayers of the Church, which have been framed and approved by the long experience of 1600. years, to fit all publick concerns, and meet with all necessary conditions, to be commended unto God in publick; how much more may we fear the many *inconveniences*, *disorders*, *irregularities*— in the private prayer, though pretended to complete and fill up the emptiness of the publick? The *defects*, and *impertinencies*, *tautologies*, *errors* and *blasphemies* of many such private prayers are obvious

obvious to each mans observation.

Object. 6. Tis further said, that it may as well be ordered, that one common Sermon should be preached in all Churches, and at all times, as that one common Prayer should be constantly used, and no other.

Answ. 1. The Church does indeed trust all her Priests, and Deacons to *preach* to the people, and by way of Sermon to exercise their gifts for the edification of others; wherein variety of expressions are very useful to move, excite, admonish, exhort, reprove,— which are the ends of *preaching*, not so of *praying*, as before was observed.

Answ. 2. If the Minister chance to fail by impertinent, tedious, or any irregular expressions in *preaching*, the matter is of less moment than to err in *prayer*: Because, *first*, it is more safe to be bold with the people than with the great

great Majesty of Heaven; the people may pardon an indiscretion, a rudeness, a mistake, if any such happen in a Sermon; but that boldness, or impudence rather, which ventures to offer up unto God their mistakes and undecent expressions, is not so venial, and easily pardonable. *Secondly*, Sermons to the people are but the means, not any essential part of Gods worship it self; but holy Prayer is a part and a principal part of Gods outward worship; so that to mistake and erre in the one, is but *indiscretion*, if not wilful; but to err in the other is *impiety*, and *irreligion*. A mistake, a falshood in prayer, is not a *lye unto men*, but *unto God*, Acts 5. 4, 5. the great Sin for which *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were struck with sudden death. Which should strike the hearts of all men with such an awful fear, as not to dare to utter any thing unto God, that may prove false, or be improper to be spoken; nor yet to go beyond what they are authoriz'd to say in publick

by

by the commands of God, and of his Church.

Object. 7. Our Saviour prayed Extempory, and by the Spirit, and his Prayer (*John* 17.) was long; and no part of a Liturgy.

Answ. Those Prayers of our Lord, which are recorded, were not Extempory, but set forms, and parts of the Jewish Liturgy in the Temple; which might be proved by particulars, if it were not too tedious to be here inserted: And his prayer *Joh.* 17. was a private, not a publick prayer; 'twas designed indeed to a publick use and benefit, not offered up in publick, and with his Disciples, though for, and in their behalf: and 'twas a prayer that was proper and peculiar to Christ alone, as the only Mediator betwixt God and man, and so not to be drawn into an example.

Object. 8. *Solomon* pray'd in the Temple a *private* prayer of his *own* in *publick*, 2 *Chron.* 6. So did *Hezekias*, 2 Chron. 30. 18. So did *Elijah* the Prophet, 1 *Kings* 18. 36. and St. *Paul* the Apostle, *Acts* 20. 36.

Answ. All these prayers, with all others recorded in holy Writ, were undoubtedly the immediate dictates of God's holy Spirit, whereunto no man, without sin and presumption, may pretend, at least not depend and relie thereupon. And as for St. *Paul*'s prayer, *Acts* 20. 36. whether 'twas a set Form or not, 'tis not express'd, nor yet many of our Saviour's prayers upon record, and so no argument *pro*, or *con* to be drawn from thence.

Object. 9. The Fathers frequently began their Homilies with prayers, and St. *Paul* himself began and ended his Epistles with prayers, and there is a prayer extant of Saint *Ambrose*, which he used before his Sermon. *Ans.*

Answ. But what kind of Prayers these were is not considered, but short Collects, or rather Ejaculations, imploring the Divine Assistance, which they used not always before, but sometimes in the midst of their Sermons also, when they treated of some high mystery of Godliness, or other matter of difficulty, or were transported with more than ordinary zeal to the practice of such of such a virtue, or the eradication of some reigning offence amongst the people; as is frequent in many of St. *Chrysostome*'s Homilies. And of St. *Ambrose*, he, being a Metropolitan, might surely assume such a power, to compose a prayer for his own use, which is not, nay ought not to be allowed to every inferior Presbyter. *Secondly*, because he used a short prayer, and this but sometimes before his Sermon, it doth not follow, That every green-headed Minister may use a prayer of his own private conception twenty times as long as the other, and so fully

as far distant from the pattern which our Lord hath given us; which is also answer sufficient to St. *Paul*'s example objected.

Object. 10. But St. *Augustine* affirms the necessity of this Prayer before Sermon, saying That Queen *Esther prayed for the temporal safety of her Nation, before she adventured to speak before the King Ahasuerus, that God would be pleased to put into her mouth congruous words. How much more ought we to pray for the like gift, when we are to speak for the eternal salvation of souls in the Word and Doctrine?* August. *de Doct. Christiana.* And again, saith he, *When the hour is come* (to preach) *before he opens his mouth, let him lift up his thirsting soul unto God.*

Answ. It is undoubtedly a laudible practice for every Preacher to pray for the Divine Assistance in his Sermons to the People. And this not only in the

the *publick* prayers of the Church, but in *private* alſo, betwixt God and his own *ſoul*; and this, as the Father directs, before he opens his mouth in *publick*. And ſuch was Queen *Eſther*'s prayer in private, before ſhe publickly ſpake to the King; which makes rather againſt, than for the *private* prayer in *publick* for, and with the whole congregation. Sr. *Auguſt.* could not be guilty of any ſuch practice; for it was againſt his judgment, being himſelf one of the Two Hundred Fathers of that *Milevitan* Councel, wherein it was decreed, that *no prayer ſhould be us'd in publick, but ſuch as were approv'd in the Synod.* Sometimes this Father did conclude his Sermon with an Exhortation, conceived in form of a Prayer, *e. g. Converſi,—Turning unto the Lord God, Father Almighty, let us render him all poſſible thanks, beſeeching him of his great mercy, that he would vouchſafe to hear our prayers, and expell the Enemy from having any influence upon our thoughts and deſires, words and actions;*

mi ; that he would increase our faith, govern our minds, fill us with spiritual cogitations, and at last bring us to everlasting happiness through Jesus Christ——which is not so much a Prayer, as an Invitation to Prayer, suitable to the Form prescribed in the Canon of our Church.

Object. 11. The liberty or *private* prayer in *publick* is the way to make an *able Ministry*, whilst thus they are put on to exercise and improve their Ministerial gifts and graces.

Answ. Tis rather the way to make a *Licentious*, *Fanatick*, *Brain-sick* Ministry, and in process of time no Ministry at all ; for from this practice it is that so very many unlearned, unstable souls, have taken up the trade, and proved as eminent, at least as well approved of by the people for their gift of Prayer, as the most learned of their Tutorers therein.

And whosoever shall impartially weigh

weigh, and without prejudice consider it, he may observe, that this *private* prayer in *publick*, both in Church and at home, is the very life and soul of that Schism and Division, which is still so perniciously kept up in this Church. Tis hereby maintained more than by preaching, and disputes. Tis from hence that Parties do call their Leaders *Godly Ministers*, and themselves the *godly Brethren*; the *children that cry Abba Father*, the *chosen and familiar friends of God*, from their over-fancy and familiar converse with God. This is that great Idol, whom all the world of Non-conformists on this side the pale of the Roman Church adore and worship, crying down the goodly frame of Gods worship in his Church under the notion of *Idolatry*, *Superstition*, and *Will-worship*, that every one may *set up his Idols in his own heart*, follow the fancy of their own imaginations, to be guilty themselves of that *Will-worship*, which they falsly impute to the Church of Christ.

Upon

Upon this Rock many thousands of Souls have suffered shipwrack, who have been otherwise piously inclined: For being taken with *holy language, religious tone,* and *seeming zeal* of this or the other person in their private and conceived prayers, they have in respect thereof slighted and undervalued even the Celestial Prayer of God the Son, all the divinely inspired prayers of God the Holy Ghost recorded in Holy Writ, with all the devout and excellent Prayers of the Church of Christ, which are framed after the pattern prescribed by our Lord, commanded by the higher Powers, used by the devout people of God in all Ages, and whereby many thousand triumphant Saints in Heaven have pray'd themselves into that blissful place of Eternal Glory.

After all this it would be considered,

That, as every error in Religion is very prolifick in bringing forth many others

others of the same mishapen stamp and nature; so this erroneous way of divine worship, the use of a *private Prayer* in a *publick Congregation* is also productive of many mistakes, and falsheeds, and deformed ways of worship in the management thereof: And

1. Such private Prayers in *publick* are generally erroneous in the length of them: For that *long Prayers* are *unlawful* is apparent

First, Because they are prohibited by our Lord, *Mat.* 6. 7. *When ye pray, use not vain repetitions*: which cannot be understood of the same prayer repeated, (which is falsly objected against the prayers of the Church) for so prayed our Lord himself, and his example surely contradicts not his Doctrine; whose Prayer, when most earnest in his Desires, was the same three times repeated, and a very short prayer also, *Mat.* 26. 44. By *vain repetitions* then must be meant the repetitions of the

same thing in other words. For *First*, to use multitude of words, and variety of expressions in prayer is *vain*, *i.e.* superfluous, impertinent, and to no purpose, since our desires may, and ought to be expressed in few words, and pertinent. *Secondly*, such are generally *vain*, *i.e.* empty, and insignificant, that have more noise than weight, more sound than sense, serving only to fill up the time, to amuse the minds, and tickle the itching ears of the Hearers.

That such kind of *long Prayers* are here forbidden by our Lord, is manifest,

Secondly, From the parallel Text quoted in the Margin, *Eccles.* 5. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few.* And this Text in the margin quotes another to the same purpose, *Prov.* 10. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*

Third-

Thirdly, From the custom of the Heathen, as it follows, *Use not vain repetitions as the Heathen do*: It was the manner of the Heathen, saith the ordinary Gloss out of *Cyprian*, to endeavour rather to be eloquent, than devout in their prayers; and to be loud and clamorous, rather than fervent and zealous. And example whereof we have 1 *Kings* 18. 27. where *Elijah* mocks the Priests of *Baal*, calling upon their Pagan Deities: *Cry aloud, for he is a God; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he is a sleep, and must be awaked.* And accordingly they cryed aloud, thinking as our Saviour here saith, *that they should be heard for their much speaking.* And therefore, as it follows, *v.* 18. *Be not like unto them.* It is a shame for Christians in the worship of the *True* God, to be like the Heathen in the worship of their *false* and *feigned* Deities. Our duty is, to endeavour more for humility, purity, and fervency in heart, than for

glib, nimble, and voluble tongues; to pray, not with multitude of words, and variety of phrases, but with pertinent and pithy expressions; with ardency, and godly zeal: and the reason follows. For

Your heavenly Father knoweth what things you stand in need of, before you ask him. He is every where present, and knoweth all things, even the secrets of all hearts, and therefore to court him with *long* and *loud* Prayers implies our ignorance, or misbelief of his perfections.

Against such extravagancy in prayers our Lord prescribes us a Form, with command saying, *After this manner pray ye*, vers. 9. *i.e.* as from the context is manifest, not after the manner of the Heathen, who think to be heard *for their much speaking*, but *after this manner*, *i.e.* in few words, and such as are pithy, and to purpose.

And, That is the meaning of our Lord in this place, that all our Prayers

should be short, and not much exceeding the length of the Pattern he hath given us, is manifest,

1. Not only from the Context impartially weigh'd and understood, but

2. From the practice of Christ's Church, which is undeniably the best and surest Interpreter of Christ's meaning in his words. And all the Prayers of the Church of Christ are, and ever were such in all Ages, in all places, amongst all persons that are called Christians: their Liturgies, or Publick prayers are short and pithy, called therefore Collects, as being so many Collections of much matter in few words.

3. Such are all the Prayers of the Holy and True Spirit of God, which stand upon record in Holy Writ, both for use, and imitation, *viz.* the whole Book of Psalms, with many more: all which, though some of them be long, as to the whole Psalm, or Hymn, yet they are divided by Verses into so many shorter Prayers.

4. Long

4. Long Prayers are not only forbidden by our Lord, as the cuſtom of the Heathen, but alſo frequently reproved by him as the practice of the Hypocrites. *Matth.* 23. 14. *Mar.* 12. 40. *Luke* 12. 47.

5. By long and manifold ſad experience tis well known, and hath been often obſerved, That all long, conceived prayers have been guilty of manifold infirmities; light, vain, and unſeemly expreſſions, not fitting to be offered up to the All wiſe, All-glorious Majeſty of Heaven; yea many falſhoods, many impieries and profanations, have been uttered in ſuch kind of prayers, and what have been contradictory to the Religious Duties we owe to God and men.

6. If it be here ſaid, How can we be too long in our Prayers, ſince our Lord continued all night in prayer, *Luke* 6. 12. and ſaith alſo, that we ought *always to pray, and not to faint*, Luke 18. 1. and his Apoſtle commands,

Con-

Continue in Prayers, and watch, Col. 4. 2. and *pray without ceasing*, 1 Thes. 5. 17. and how can these Commands be obey'd without long prayer?

Answ. To this I answer, that there is a great difference between long prayers, and praying long. The one is unlawful, because forbidden and reprov'd by our Lord; the other is a Religious Duty, because both commanded, and practis'd by him: and therefore St. *Augustin* saith, *Oratio plus gemitibus quàm sermonibus agitur, plus fletu quàm affatu*: And tis thus, *The Spirit helpeth our Infirmities* by quickning our Devotions, and inflaming our Desires; *he maketh intercession for us*, i. e. as the same Father, secretly inclining our hearts to intercede for our selves, *with groanings that cannot be uttered*, *Rom.* 8. 26. From which Text it is apparent (quite contrary to the Enthusiasts sense thereof) that tis inward groanings, not outward bellowings; the internal fervent desires of the Soul, not mul-

multitude of words, which is the proper work of the Holy Spirit in prayer.

The ordinary Gloss out of St. *Chrysostome* asks the same Question: *If we must not use many words in our Prayers, how shall we pray without ceasing, as tis commanded?* And answers out of the same Father, *That both are to be observ'd in our Religious Devotions:* viz. 1. *That our Prayers be short. And 2ly Frequent, and continued. So Christ hath both commanded, and also exemplified in his Personal Prayers. And St.* Paul *also, That our Prayers be short, but often renewed; in few words, but with great devotion; ending briefly, and beginning afresh; leaving some intervals, or spaces of time for the re-enquickening and enkindling the fire of fervor and holy zeal in the Soul.* And its added out of Cassianus; *The Fathers conceived it most useful to use short, but frequent Prayers. To be frequent, that our Souls may cleave the more steddy unto God by often addresses to his Majesty. To be short, that we may quench the fiery darts*

of

of the Devil, who is most busie to tempt us to dulness and deadness of heart in our Prayers; which he very easily effects, when the Prayers we say, or hear, are long, and continued without any intermission.

Tis recorded of those Primitive Christians in *Egypt*, who were most famous for their transcendent Devotions, and great Austerities in the exercise of Religious Duties, That their Prayers we many, and often, night and day continued; and yet, that they were short also: not only in their solemn Assemblies, and publick Offices of Devotion, but also, That their private Prayers were as so many Raptures, and Ejaculations, or Desires, darted up into Heaven. For, as the Father saith thereupon, *Absit ab Oratione multa lobutio, sed non desit multa precatio, si fervens perseveret intentio. Let not our Devotions be accompanied with much speaking, but much praying, so long as we can hold out in attention and fervency.*

FINIS.

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FINIS.

Dr STEWARD's Judgment of a *Private PRAYER* in *Publick*, Relating to the Orders of the CHURCH of ENGLAND.

With an Account of the *BIDDING PRAYER.*

OXFORD,
Printed by *L. Lichfield*, Printed to the University, for *Richard Sherlock*, Bookseller.
In the Year 1684.

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versity, for Richard Sherlock Bookseller.
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These are the words of his Inscription, near the place where he was interr'd in France.

MEMORIÆ
RICHARDI STEWARD,
DECANI WESTMONASTER.
ET SACELLI REGII
IN *ANGLIA*:
Qui hoc tantum Monumento suo
inscribi voluit Epitaphium.

Hic jacet
R. STEWARD,
QUI
Assidue oravit pro pace
ECCLESIÆ.
Obiit 14°. Novemb. 1652.
ÆTAT. LVIII°.

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ÆTAT. LVIII°.

THat *it is not lawful for any Person, that hath received holy Orders in the Church of* England, *to use any extemporary, or premeditated Prayers of his own private composure, either before or after Sermon, or in the Church in the publick Worship and Service of God, but only the Liturgy set forth and allowed.*

First, Because it is directly against his own solemn promise made to the Church, when he came to be ordained; and that Promise is set down under his hand, when he subscribed the three Articles, (contained in *Canon* 36.) the second whereof runs thus, That *he will use the Service-Book prescribed in Publick prayer, and no other.*

Secondly, Because the use of such Prayers is directly against an Act of Parliament, *viz.* that for the *Uniformity*

of

of Common Prayers, which enjoyns peremptorily under ſharp puniſhments, that no man ſhall uſe any other open Prayers than are mentioned and ſet forth in the ſaid Book.

Thirdly, No man is to preſume to exerciſe any Office in the Church, except he be called to it, as it was in *Aaron*.

Seeing therefore both the Church and State have expreſly enjoyn'd us to uſe no Publick prayers, but the Liturgy, (except his Majeſty give leave upon extraordinary Occaſion for the drawing up of Forms, which leave hath ground *de Jure communi*, both Eccleſiaſtical, and Civil) it followeth, that neither Church nor State have given power to any to vent themſelves in ſuch open Prayers in the Church, becauſe they expreſly forbid it.

To preſume then to uſe ſuch Prayers, contains in it a complication of ſeveral Sins.

1. The Sin of Falſhood, or the breach

breach of ſolemn Promiſe, confirm'd by ſubſcription of the Church.

2. 'Tis an act of Diſobedience to the Higher Powers, and ſo it is an expreſs ſin againſt the Fifth Commandement.

3. 'Tis an act of Injury, and Uſurpation offered to the Church, in preſuming to thruſt themſelves into a ſacred Office, which ſuch men are not to be intruſted with, not thought fit at all to execute: for many may be able to diſcourſe unto men, (ſince if they chance there to fail in point of truth, or congruity, the matter is of leſs conſequence,) but the Church will but truſt but few that ſhall lead Men, when they ſpeak to God; becauſe there a Falſhood may prove an abomination in Speech, an Incongruity may ſoon amount to a Blaſphemy.

I would glanly demand of any prudent perſon, whether he conceive, that when the Church of *England* was in her greateſt glory, ſhe had ever in it 9500 Perſons, anſwerable to the 9500 Pariſhes,

shes, that were able to lead the people in prayer? Sad experience tells us the contrary, and informs us loudly enough of the Solœcisms and Blasphemies; and the same experience tells us, that their Directory helps them not at this dead lift, nay it may often prove the greatest impediment, since were some weak men allowed as well their Matter as Words, they might perhaps come off with some tolerable approbation; but being forced to confine themselves to matter, which either they well understand not, or are not so well us'd to speak of, their Prayers are oftentimes vain and ridiculous, or, which is worse, erroneous and blasphemous.

The licentiousness of Devotion (that each private Priest durst adventure to lead others in Publick prayer) breeding great disturbance in the Primitive Church, brought the Fathers to decree thus, in the second Council of *Milevis*, (where St. *Austin* sate, as appears by the Subscription) That no Publick

pray-

Prayers should be offered up to God, that had not been approv'd of in a Council; or least agreed upon by the more discreet sort of men. *Ne forte aliquid contra fidem, vel per ignorantiam, vel per minus studium sit compositum? Lest either through ignorance, or want of good paine, the publick Faith might receive hurt by such Prayers.* Now, besides other hurts which the Church of *England* hath received by this unlawful course, all know that she hath received one remarkable mischief in the neglect and scorn of her Liturgy. For when *Cartwright*, the Puritan Incendiary, saw he wanted Power, either to extirpate, or to alter our established *Book of Common Prayer*, he was the first durst boldly use this forbidden Knell of Devotion; and those that followed him improved it to so great an height, by posting over our Liturgy with so much carelesness and scorn, and by giving all the Advantages to those Forms of their own, both of the Voice, and of the Eyes, and of

the Hand: that the People began e're long to think, that the reading of the Liturgy was but an useless task impos'd by the Church on the Priests; but that they compleatly serv'd God, if they came when the Psalms were singing, because, besides that they serv'd God, and had the benefit of a Sermon, they heard a long Prayer also, set out with all the Devotion, and all the advantage that it could possibly receive, from the Art, or from the natural good parts of the person who compos'd it. So that he who will needs continue the use of these forbidden prayers in the Pulpit, takes the readiest course (as much as in him lies) for the rooting out the publick Liturgy.

I suppose, that these men do not at all like the course which the Independants now use in Prayer, who permit this extemporary or voluntary way, not only to the Priests, but to the Soldiers, and to the Mechanicks; and I imagine a main cause of their mistakes to

be,

be, because such an Office is intruded on by those men, who have not just authority to perform it. But then, if they would consider things well, they would easily find, that this use of forbidden Prayer hath metamorphos'd them into Independants, since they have no more authority to compose such Forms from that Apostolical Church that ordained them, than either that person hath, who is now imployed to make Shoes, or that other Ecclesiastick, whose Formalities are a Belt, and a Buff-Jerkin. It may be said perhaps, that many Churchmen both of great knowledge, and great place, have themselves us'd these forms of Prayer, and upon that ground why may not they? Truly, if to argue thus were concluding, it might soon free us, not only from the ties of many English laws, but from the obligation of the Decalogue it self; which, without all doubt, is broken often enough, not only by those of the common sort, but by men of great Place and

and Knowledge. But we muſt diſtinguiſh between *Conſuetudo*, and *Corruptela*, and ſo learn, that Uſages taken up againſt preſs-written Laws are *Corruptions*, but not juſtifiable Cuſtoms.

One thing I ſhall adde more, and it is a ſhort Diſcourſe, How the Pulpit-Forms of Prayer were brought into the Church of *England*. We muſt know then, that in the time of *Popery*, the manner commonly was to uſe the *Lords Prayer*, or elſe an *Ave Maria* before Sermon; ſo that when *Edward the Sixth* came to compoſe his Injunctions, he made choice (as he had good reaſon) of the *Lords Prayer* for that purpoſe. But becauſe it was thought fit, that the King's juſt Supremacy in Eccleſiaſtical things ſhould be at the leaſt weekly publiſhed to the People, it was thought expedient to premiſe to the *Pater noſter* a Form (as his Injunction ſtiles it) of *Bidding Prayer*; wherein the Prieſt was not to ſpeak to *God*, but only to the *People*, exhorting them to pray inſtantly

ſtantly for ſuch and ſuch perſons, but he prayed not to God at all, untill he cloſed with the *Lords Prayer*. This was likewiſe confirm'd in the Injunctions of Queen *Elizabeth*, and expreſly call'd the Form of *Bidding Prayer*. And when King *James* of bleſſed memory turn'd thoſe Injunctions into Canons, his Law runs (*Canon* 55.) That Miniſters ſhould move the People to joyn with him in Prayer, *viz.* in this Form of Bidding Prayer: *Ye ſhall pray for Chriſts Catholick Church* &c. *concluding always with the Lords Prayer.*

Now let any indifferent man judge: Are Exhortations proper Forms of Prayer? Nay, let a diſcerning man conſider it well, and it will appear, that things there prudently ſpoken by way of Exhortation, and Narration, would prove very abſurd in Prayer. How fond would it appear, to tell the great GOD of Heaven of the *Kings moſt Excellent Majeſty, our Sovereign Lord Charles, by the Grace of God King of England,*

land, &c. or, as some do oft tell GOD of such a Lord, Earl of such a Place, and Baron of another, and of his Majesties Honourable Privy Councel, and his very good Lord &c. And yet when we do but exhort them to joyn their Prayers, such Clauses may not be mist. I can scarce think of any other way to defend them; and yet 'tis true that this Form is there, viz. *Can.* 55. call'd *Prayer before Sermon*, and so it is, because we then say together with the Preacher the *Lords Prayer*, to those very purposes he exhorts. And they well know, who know Divinity, that all kinds of Prayer are reducible to that holy Form; but it follows not, that the Preacher's Exhortation is a Prayer, for that he then speaks not at all to God himself but to the People. Indeed upon an occasion extraordinary it is a Prayer of no ordinary composition, and therefore call'd the Form of *Bidding Prayer* both by a reform'd King, and a very glorious Queen: and yet *de facto* mis-

misus'd by an itching Puritanical party; at first (no doubt) by Cunning, and Design, and afterwards (as I verily think for the most part) by a mistake of that bad end to which it drove; or by inadvertency of the Law. But it is most apparent, that such forbidden Prayers are an especial means to [illegible] the whole English Liturgy.

A

DISCOURSE

Of the

Difference betwixt *Long Prayers* prohibited, and *Continuance* in Prayers commanded.

When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the Hypocrites, &c. Matth. 6. 5.

OXFORD,
Printed by *L. Lichfield*, Printer to the University, for *Richard Sherlock*, Bookseller.
In the Year 1684.

A DISCOURSE

Of the

Difference betwixt Long Prayers prohibited, and Continuance in Prayers commanded.

A Discourse of the Difference betwixt Long Prayers *prohibited, and* continuance *in Prayers commanded.*

THey who are true members of Christ's Church below, are conform to the glorious Saints in Heaven above: [a] they do the will of God on Earth, as it is in Heaven, [b] and that's undoubtedly the way to Heaven: We cannot possibly lose our way thither, whilst we follow their steps, who are thither gone before us.

Those Triumphant Saints in Heaven rest not day nor night, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God* [c] *Almighty*. Whereunto conforms the man after God's own heart, saying, *O Lord God of my salvation, I have cryed day and night before thee.* [d] Our Lord commends it as

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[a] *Exod.* 25.40. *Acts* 7. 44. *Heb.* 6. 11.
[b] *Matth.*6.11. [c] *Isa.*6.3. *Rev.*4.8. [d] *Psa.* 88.1.

a duty incumbent, that men ought always to pray [a]: and by his Apostle commands it positively, *Pray without ceasing.* [b] *Giving thanks always:* [c] *Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication.* [d]

But these Examples and Commands are not so to be understood, as if we should do nothing else but pray, which was an old Heresy of the *Messalians*, and *Euchites* [e], long since condemned by the Church of Christ, as being a thing impossible to pray without ceasing, in the bare literal sense, because this corruptible body presseth down the soul, and corporal necessities do call for supply: Neither yet, that we should make long Prayers, which is the new error, and great mistake of these times; the which, though generally the most used, and best liked, as being set off with the paint of a seeming zele, and pretence of

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a *Luk.* 18.1. b 1 *Thes.* 5. 13. c *Ephes.* 5. 20. d *Ephes.* 6. 18. e S. *Aug. l. de har. Theod. Eccl. hist. l.* 4. *c.* 10.

the

the Spirit; yet the unlawfulneſs of ſuch long Prayers will appear, if we will without prejudice and partiality conſider, that

1. They are forbidden by our Lord, ſaying, *When ye pray, uſe not vain repetitions*, Matth. 6. 7. in which words our Lord means not, the ſame prayers repeated, (as is falſly objected againſt the Prayers of the Church,) for thus our Lord prayed himſelf, *Matth.* 26. 39. 44. where his Prayer was ſhort, and three times repeated.

And therefore undoubtedly, by vain repetitions in praying, is underſtood multitude of Words, and variety of expreſſions to the ſame purpoſe, or rather to no purpoſe; ſince our Deſires both may and ought to be expreſſed in few words and pertinent, according to the pattern our Lord hath given us.

And that tis the meaning of our Lord, when he ſaith, *After this manner pray ye*, that our Prayers ſhould be generally formed to the length of his Prayer preſcribed, will appear

1. From the Context, if seriously weighed, and rightly understood; wherein is manifest, that the manner of praying by such a short Form, is commanded in opposition to the Heathenish use of much speaking in Prayer.

2. From the Parallel-Text in the Margin, *Eccles.* 5. 2. *Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, and therefore let thy words be few.*

3. From the Prayers of Christ's Church, which are in all Liturgies of the Christian World, for the most part of the same length; and surely, the general Practice of the Church is the best Interpreter of the Scripture.

4. Such are generally also all the Prayers of the Holy Spirit of God, which stand upon Record in Holy Writ, [*viz.* the Book of Psalms, with many more:] We meet with none that are of such a continued length, as are in use amongst us, but they are all divided

vided, by distinct Verses, into so many several shorter Prayers.

Long Prayers are forbidden by our Lord, because such is the custom of the Heathen. [*As the Heathen do*, Matth. 6. 7.] who mind more the Oratory and Language, Tone and Pronuntiation, than the Humility and Devotion of the Soul in prayer: and tis much misbecoming Christians to worship the true God, as the Heathen do their false and feigned Deities. And

Because they imply a false notion of the Majesty of Heaven, and a misbelief of his Divine perfections; as if he were asleep, and must be awakened, or did not understand our Wants and Desires, or, being otherwise imployed, he could not attend our Petitions, except in multitude of Words expresst, and loud bawling for audience: So prayed the Priests of *Baal*, 1 Kings 18. 27. and so saith our Lord of all Heathen people, that they think they shall be heard for their much speaking; which is direct-

ly contrary to the true faith of a Christian, who believeth and acknowledgeth the Omniscience, and Omnipresence of God; as it follows in the Eighth verse, *Your Heavenly Father knoweth what things you stand in need of, before you ask*: which Divine Truth is implicately denied by loud and long Prayers.

Long prayers are not only forbidden by our Lord, as the custom of the Heathen, but also frequently reproved by him as the practice of the *Hypocrites*, who love to stand praying in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the Streets, that they may be seen of Men, that they may be taken notice of for Godly men, desiring rather to seem, than really to be Religious, loving the praise of Men more than the praise of GOD. *Matth.* 6. 5. *c.* 23. 14. *Mark* 12. 40. *Luke* 20. 47. *Joh.* 12. 43.

To pray continually then, is neither to be understood of doing nothing else but *pray*, nor yet of using *long* prayers;

the

the one being prohibited by our Lord, and the other condemned by his Church; but in this and the like Expressions is commanded

The intense Devotion of the Soul in Prayer: So our Lord expounds his own Command, that men ought always to pray, viz. *that they faint not*, *Luke* 18.1. to wit, for want of that holy fervour and devout zeal, which is the life and soul of an effectual Prayer. And this same Celestial fire of holy Zeal in prayer, spends not it self in multitude of Words, and much babling of the Lips, but is expressed in sighs and *groans which cannot be uttered*, Rom. 8.8.26. which are truly the Breathings of the holy Spirit of God in prayer, who dwels not upon the Tongue, but in the Heart.

To pray continually, enjoyns the constant, and continued returns of this holy Duty; that we lose no time, neglect no opportunity either of the Publick prayers of the Church, or of pri-

vate prayer, and Closet-Devotions upon the set, solemn, and accustomed times thereof; remembring, that the *Time* only, which is imployed in the sacred Acts of Piety towards God, and Charity towards Man is *redeemed* out of the all-devouring jaws of Death, and dark Oblivion, to be the Seminary of a blessed Eternity, *when time shall be no more.* Tis to this end our Lord commands us to *watch and pray*; by our constant prayers at Evening, at Midnight, at the Cock crowing, and in the Morning, to watch for the coming of our Lord to put an end to Time, and to all that is by Time limited and circumscribed.

That we ought always to pray, *i. e.* (say the Fathers upon the Text) at those appointed Hours observed by the Church of God, both under the Law, called therefore the Hours of the Temple, and under the Gospel, called the

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[1] *Ephes.* 5. 6. [2] *Col.* 4. 5. *Mark* 13. 35.

Canonical Hours; so generally observed formerly of all devout Christians, that St. *Hierome*, [*Epist. ad Eustor.*] with his *Quis nescit*, takes it for granted, that no Godly Christian is either ignorant or negligent in the observation of such Hours, as being probably observed by holy *David*, or from his example derived, saying of his own daily practice, *Psal.* 119. 164. *Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judyments.*

To continue in prayer, is to have our Hearts so inflamed with the love of God, as to be in a continual disposition to pray; and this not only at all set and accustomed times but at all times, and upon all occasions and objects presented, to raise up our souls upon the Spiritual wings of holy Meditations, celestial Affections, devout Colloquies, and Ejaculatory converses with Heaven.

Thus *Enoch* walked with God, and was translated. *Gen.* 5. 24. *Heb.* 11. 5.

Thus

Thus King *David* professeth, *I have set God always before me*: Psal. 16. 9. And, *I will give thanks unto the Lord, his praise shall ever be in my mouth*: Ps. 34. 1. No time omitted, *Evening*, and *Morning*, and *Noon-day*: Ps. 55. 17, 18. *Early and late*, Ps. 63. 1, 7. No place pretermitted; in the *Wilderness*, in the land of *Jordan*, and the unbeaten paths of *Hermon*. Ps. 42. 8.

Tis the great and constant imployment of a true Christian's life, to depend upon *God*, to fix all our Hopes, all our Joy, and Consolation; all that we can reasonably desire to enjoy conducing to our happiness, both in this, and in the other world; in God alone, who is the Beginning, the Mean, and the End of our Being.

In the first and purest times of Christianity, while the blood of *Christ* was yet warm, and more inflamed the Souls of true Believers, than in these later and colder times; then were the hearts of the Religious continually in Heaven,

by

by holy and Divine Aſpirations, even when their hands were imployed in any and every of their works upon earth. So the Divine *Ephrem. Sive operaris, ſive ſedeas, ſive comedas,*——— In all thy works, even in Eating, and Drinking, and Travelling, ſitting, going, ſtanding, lying,—*Pray without ceaſing*; Take hint from every thing thou ſeeſt, heareſt, taſteſt,—to lift up thy heart unto God, and refer all to his glory.

Tis recorded of St. *Bartholomew* the Apoſtle, that he prayed an hundred times in a day, and an hundred times in the night alſo.

Ephrem. tom 1. *Homil. de Orando Deum.* So the great St. *Baſil, Hom. in S. Jude.* So St. *Chryſoſt. Hom.* 23. *in Mat.*

St. *Hierom* profeſſeth of himſelf, that often on the tops of Mountains, and in hollow Valleys; and craggy Rocks, with eyes lifted up to Heaven, and flowing with tears, he poured forth his ſoul in holy prayers, and meditations. *S. Hierom. Ep. ad Euſtoc.* So meditates

S.

S. *Austin* also: *Te, Domine, meditor per dies sine cessatione, Te sentiam per soporem in nocte; Te alloquar* —— Aug. Med.

'O that I could meditate upon Thee, 'O Lord, through the whole day, and 'not ceale to be affected with thee in 'the night; my spirit speaking unto 'thee, and my mind conversing with 'thee alway, and alone! Blessed are 'they, who think of nothing, speak of 'nothing, but the Lord; who love no'thing above thee, desire nothing be'sides thee: Blessed are they, whose 'Hope alone is the *Lord*, and all whose 'Work is *Prayer*. And several of the devout Fathers computed all that time lost, wherein God was not in their minds, and memories: And there is great reason for it, as the same St. *Austin* meditates; For as there is no moment of Time, wherein we enjoy not the sweet influences of the Divine Goodness, and stand in need also of *God*'s protecting Presence with us; so there should be no time, wherein we have

have not *God in our thoughts*. Aug. in Marcum. *Wait on thy God continually*. Hos. 12. 16. *Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore*. Pſ. 105. 4. Thus St. *Paul*, and truly devout Chriſtians with him, have *their converſation in Heaven*, Phil. 3. 20 whilſt they are upon Earth; and that's the way ſurely to have our conſummation in Heaven, when we ſhall be taken from the Earth.

have not God in our thoughts. Aug. in Marcum. Wait on thy God continually. Hol. 12. 6. Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore. 1 C. 10. 4. Thus St. Paul, and truly devout Christians with him, have their conversation in heaven, Phil. 3. 20. whilst they are upon Earth; and that's the way surely to have our consummation in Heaven, when we shall be taken from the Earth.

MEDITATIONS

UPON

Our going to *CHURCH*, with ſome ſhort Directions for our Demeanour in the *Houſe of GOD*, touching ſome too much miſtaken and neglected Acts of Divine Worſhip.

As for me, I will come into thy Houſe in the multitude of thy Mercies; and in thy fear will I worſhip towards thy Holy Temple. Pſ. 5. 7.

OXFORD,

Printed by *L. Lichfield*, Printer to the Univerſity, for *Richard Sherlock*, Booksſeller. In the Year 1684.

MEDITATIONS

UPON

Our going to CHURCH, with some short Directions for our Behaviour in the House of GOD, touching some too much mistaken and neglected Acts of Divine Worship

OXFORD,

Printed by L. Lichfield, Printer to the University, for Richard Davis, Bookseller. 1684.

MEDITATIONS upon our going to Church: with some short Directions for your Demeanour in the House, and in the Service of GOD.

UPon your going to Church, three things will be necessary for you to consider: 1. The Condition of the Place whither you are going, 2. The great End of your going thither, and 3. How there you are to demean your self. All this you would consider, if you were going to the Palace of an earthly Prince, who is but a mortal man, like your self: and you surely have much more reason to consider the particulars, now that you are going unto the Courts of the Lord's house.

First then, as to the House whither you are going, 'tis indeed, as to its Fabrick, but like other houses, made of

wood and stone; [even as the Lord's day is but like other days, as to the air and light of heaven:] but the relative holiness of this House, and its eminency above other houses, will appear by the Names whereby it is called both in the Book, and by the people of God.

Under the Law, it was called the *Tabernacle of the Congregation*, i. e. the place of *God's* meeting with his people; the *Temple of the Lord*, where he presents himself to the contemplation or view of his Worshippers, sitting betwixt the Cherubims as on his throne of State. Tis also called the *Sanctuary of the Lord*, the *House of God*, the *Habitation of his Holiness*, and *the place where his Honour dwelleth*. All which Names do explain each other, and need no Interpretation.

Under the Gospel tis called ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the Church of God*, κυριακὸν, *the Lord's House*, βασιλικὸν, *the King's Palace*, and *Oratorium*, the *House of Prayer*. Any of which Names (much more

all

all of them together considered, will oblige any man, who hath any sense of Religion, to obey that command of God himself, which is not merely ceremonial and typical, but moral and perpetual, *Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary.* Lev. 19. 30.

Secondly, As to the great end of your going to Church, it is to present your self before the Lord, and there to adore the great Majesty of Heaven, from whom you have your life, and breath, and all things.

It is not to *serve your self*, by hearing this or t'other fine-gifted Minister tickling your itching ears, by his taking Discourses agreeable to your fancy; but to *serve the Lord* is your Errand to his House, viz. there to joyn with the Minister, and the Congregation, in publick prayers and praises of God, in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual songs; in Confessions, Thanksgivings, and Benedictions, as wherein chiefly the Service of God consists.

Be-

Behold, now praise the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord: ye that by night stand in the House of the Lord, even in the Courts of the house of our God. Lift up your hands in the Sanctuary, and praise the Lord. Ps. 134. 1. 2.

As for me, I will worship towards thy holy Temple, and praise thy Name. Ps. 138. 2.

Thirdly, As to your Carriage and Demeanour in the house of God, you are commanded, *Keep thy foot, when thou goest into the house of God*, Eccles. 5. 1. enjoyning thee, *First*, to beware of all light, unseemly, indecent, and irreverent carriage, and to shew humility, and devotion in all the gestures of thy Outward man: *bowing down* thy self, *and kneeling before the Lord thy Maker*; Ps. 95. 6. before him, who made both thy body, and soul, and joyned them together, that they might be joyned in his Service. So worshipped the people of God, the whole Congregation *bowed themselves with their faces to the ground.*

2 Chron.

2 Chron. 7. 2. And so all good people resolve to do: *We will go into his Tabernacle, and fall low on our knees before his footstool.* Ps. 132. 7. *Secondly,* The feet of the Inward man must also, and chiefly, be kept upright in the house of God. Thy Affections are the *feet*, or motions of thy Soul: these must be kept free from all secular cares, pure from all sensual lusts, clean from all wanton wicked inclinations, yea from all thoughts of any worldly concerns; for *ye cannot serve God and Mammon.* Mat. 6. 24.

In the High-priest's forehead was engraven in a plate of Gold, *Holiness to the Lord.* Exod. 28. 36. and every ordinary Priest was commanded to *wash* before he entred into the Sanctuary: Exod. 30. 19, 20. intimating that exact Purity and Holiness which is required of all, both Priests and People, when we approach the presence of the Lord in his holy Temple. So saith the holy man of God, *Holiness becometh thy house.*

O Lord, for ever, Ps. 93. 5. and he resolves accordingly, *I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I go to thine Altar.* Ps. 26. 6.

Be not slothful and negligent, averse and careless, backward and tardy in coming to the Church; for many and mischievous are the consequents of coming late. For 1. you rob your self of the opportunity of your private prayers for a Blessing upon the publick. 2. You lose the benefit of the publick Confession and Absolution, which are of high esteem and value to all who are wisely religious. And 3. to deprive your self wittingly and willingly of any part of God's publick Worship, is both a sin and a loss of so great an account, as cannot easily be expreſt, nor will be ordinarily believed. Against such sinful sloth and neglect endeavour to have imprinted in your heart the love of *God's* House, and of his Service there performed. Say with the man after God's own heart,

Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy House, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. Ps. 26. 8.

I was glad when they said unto me, We will go unto the house of the Lord. Psalm 122. 1.

Our feet stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem. vers. 2.

I. *When you come to the Church-door.*

COnsider, that you are now upon entrance into the Presence-chamber of the great King of the World, whose *Throne of Glory* is in Heaven above, but his *Throne of Grace* in his Temple here below. Say then within your self,

Surely the Lord is in this place.

How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, this is the gate of heaven. Gen. 28. 16, 17.

How amiable are thy Dwellings, thou Lord of hosts!

My ſoul hath a deſire and longing to enter into the Courts of the Lord! my heart and my fleſh rejoyce in the living God.

Yea the Sparrow hath found her an houſe, and the Swallow a neſt, where ſhe may lay her young, even thine Altars, O Lord of hoſts, my King, and my God!

Bleſſed are they who dwell in thy houſe: they will always be praiſing thee. Pſ. 84. 1, 2, 3, 4

And moſt happy were I, could I both eſteem it, and make it my greateſt joy, and conſtant labour of love, to praiſe the Lord in his Temple.

II. *When you are entred, and view the* Baptiſterion, *or* Font.

GIve hearty thanks unto God for your Chriſtendom; that by holy Baptiſm he hath called you to the ſtate of Grace and Salvation through *Jeſus Chriſt*; and humbly beſeech God to give you his grace to continue in the ſame

same to your lifes end, by the religious observance of that Vow, which was so solemnly taken in your Name, the which you must now perform, that you forfeit not the great priviledges, rewards, and honours of being a member of *Christ*, a child of *God*, and an heir of the Kingdom of Heaven.

III. *When you view the Pulpit.*

REmember how many good Lessons you have received thence; the which not being carefully practised, will rise up in judgment against you in the great day of your Trial. Resolve therefore, for the future, to be a Doer of the Word, and not a Hearer only, deceiving your own Self.

IV. *When you look up towards the Altar, say,*

WHat reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the benefits he hath done unto me?

I will receive the cup of ſalvation, [offer the ſacrifice of Thankſgiving for my Redemption,] *and call upon the name of the Lord.*

I will pay my Vows unto the Lord in the ſight of all the people, in the Courts of the Lords houſe; even in the midſt of thee O Jeruſalem. Praiſe the Lord. Pſ. 116. 12, 13, 14, 18, 19.

Glory be to the Father—
As it was in the beginning—

V. *When you come to your Seat, kneeling down, pray,*

I. Prayer.

LET thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of thy humble ſervants: and grant that what we aſk faithfully, we may obtain effectually, through Jeſus Chriſt.

II. Prayer.

II. Prayer.

O God, for as much as without thee we are not able to please thee, grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; and more especially be assistant to us in all the holy Actions of this Day, through Jesus Christ—

III. Prayer.

AND since by reason of our sins we are unworthy to offer up any sacrifice to so pure a Majesty, grant, merciful Lord, both to me, and to all thy faithful people, Pardon, and Peace: that being cleansed from all our sins, we may serve thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ—

DIRECTIONS relating to some parts of the Publick Worship.

AS soon as the Minister begins with the Publick Worship, all your Private Meditations and Prayers must be waved, and your Mind applied to attend diligently, and to joyn devoutly in every part and passage of Divine Service; considering, that this is the great end of your coming to Church, and your business there is to serve the Lord with your Christian Brethren in Publick.

1. Therefore when the Minister exhorts you, out of the Word of God, to confess and acknowledg your sins and wickedness, harden not your heart, but with all possible humility both of Body and Soul say after the Minister in the Confession of Sin: and to this, and to every Prayer, or other Act of Divine Worship, where tis prescribed, neglect not to say, *Amen*; for that is, as it were

were the Seal to confirm to your soul the benefits thereof. And the Hebrews have a saying, that Whosoever says *Amen*, with all his might, opens the doors of Paradise.

2. After the Confession, when the Minister comes to the words of Absolution, bow down your head, and say softly in your heart, *Lord, let this Pardon pronounced by thy Minister fall upon my soul, and seal thereunto the forgiveness of all my sins.*

3. The Psalms and Hymns are to be answered verse by verse with the Minister, that so all may joyn and bear a part in the Service of God: for, *in his Temple doth every man speak of his Honour* Psal. 29. 9. And here, although you cannot read, yet your Heart may joyn with them that do read; and your Mouth also may shew forth the Praise of God, by saying after every Psalm, *Glory be to the Father, and to*— or else, if it fall in course, *As it was in the beginning, is now*, &c. adding always, *Amen*, to your

preſs how affectionately you deſire the Glory of God.

4. Be not ſilent, nor aſhamed publickly and audibly to make Confeſſion of the holy Chriſtian Faith, when you are thereunto called by the Miniſter; for this is a duty you owe both to God and Man; it is an act of God's Worſhip and a Declaration that you hold the ſame Faith with all true Chriſtians: and therfore tis required of you, not only *with the Heart to believe unto righteouſneſs*, but that *with the Mouth* alſo *Confeſſion be made unto ſalvation.*

And when the Confeſſion of Faith is publickly pronounced, do not you ſit, or loll, as if it concerned you not, but *ſtand up* with the reſt of the Congregation, to ſignifie and declare, that you will *ſtand* to this *Faith*, and *earneſtly contend for it*, as being the ſame *which was once given to*, or *by*, the Saints, the holy Apoſtles.

5. Be not ſo cold and careleſs in giving Honour to God, as not to bow

at the Name of JESUS: for it is a duty positively commanded, and generally practised by the Church and people of God in all ages. And therefore give no ear to those deceivable Criticisms, corrupt Glosses, and false Inferences, which are too frequently but profanely urged, to make void the Commandement of God, in the omission of this Religious Practice. If you hear any such Allegations out of the Pulpit, detest them the rather, that any Act of Religious Worship should be spoken against in the place, where whatever tends to the honour of God should be magnified and advanced.

6. That you may not be tired with the length of Divine Service, consider 1. the great variety of its several parts, as consisting of Prayers, and Praises, Confessions, Thanksgivings, Invitations, Lessons, Admonitions,— all of which are with most admirable Prudence, and religious Wisdom so ordered and contrived to follow each o-

ther; that so the ending of one, and beginning of another, may renew and re-enquicken your Devotion, chearfully to joyn in all.

Remember 2. whose Service it is you are a doing, and continue therein from the beginning to the end, that you may reap the Benefit of the whole Office, both of the Absolution in the beginning, and of the Blessing in the end, and of the *Amen's* throughout.

A SERMON.

Preached upon the Arch-Biſhop of *YORK*s *Provincial Viſitation* at *WARRINGTON*.

Acts. 20. 28.

Take heed to your ſelves, and to all the Flock.———

OXFORD,

Printed by *L. Lichfield*, Printer to the Univerſity, for *Ric. Sherlock* Bookſeller.
In the Year 1684.

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In the Year 1[illegible].

A SERMON PREACHED AT A VISITATION.

Act. 20. 28.

Take heed to your ſelves, and to all the Flock——

N the context we have S. *Paul* upon his Viſitation at *Miletus*, verſ. 17. And the Viſitation, as this which is now holden with us, is *Provincial*, all the Clergy of the Province of *Epheſus*, being convened by this great Viſitor, and appear before him, *verſ.* 18.

The Text preſents you with a part-

but

but 'tis the principal part of the *Visitation Sermon*, or as I may rather call it, *The Visitors charge to the Clergy of the Province*. The first part of which charge is:

1. *Take heed to your selves*: To you my Brethren of the Clergy, is this charge more strictly given, then to the Laity. For to the people God hath appointed Pastors who are commanded in the text to take heed to the charge committed to them: But who shall feed and guide the Shepherds, who shall watch over the Watchmen, or teach the Teachers? *Ye are the salt of the earth but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and troden under foot of men.* Mat. 5. 13.

2. Take heed to your selves, is the first part of the charge, And secondly to your Flock: The order observed in this Double Charge, is the next thing observable, which is the same observed by our Lord himself, in his charge to S. *Peter*, and in him to all Pastors of the

Church

Church, saying *Luc.* xxii. 32. *When thou art converted, then afterward strengthen thy Brethren*, and *John* xxi. 15. *Simon, son of Jonas, loveſt thou me*, and if ſo, it then follows, *Feed my Sheep*; Implicitly commanding all Paſtors of his Flock: Firſt to be themſelves truly converted unto God, and their ſouls inflamed with the ſacred fire of Divine Love, and then they may hope that their pains will be ſucceſsful for the feeding and ſtrengthening the Sheep of Chriſt. That rule of Righteouſneſs and Charity which is the ſum of the ſecond Table of the Law, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbor as thy ſelf*, commands this order to be obſerved, To love thy ſelf aright in the firſt place, and then thy Neighbor as thy ſelf: St. *Bernard* thus beſpeaks every Shepherd of ſouls. *Tu frater cui nondum eſt firma ſatis propria ſalus, cui charitas adhuc nulla eſt, aut adeo tenera & arundinea, ut omni flatui cedat, omni credat ſpiritui, omni circumferatur vento doctrinæ, quanam dementiæ queſo, aliena curare, aut ambire*

aut aquiescis? And upon *Cant.* 1. 6. *They have made me the keeper of the Vineyards, but mine own Vineyard have I not kept*; he severely checks, and reproves himself, that he had taken on him the Cure of of other mens souls, having not sufficiently cared for and cured his own: *Et miror*—*I do much wonder* (saith he) *at the Impudence of those persons, that thrust themselves to be Labourers in the Lords Vineyard, whilst their own Vineyard is overgrown with Bryars and thorns:* The Leper under the Law was commanded to have a covering upon his upper lip, *Lev.* 13. 43. *ut non docere alios præsumat* — saith *Hesychius*: that no man presume to open his lips in the Congregation, for the instruction of others, who is himself infected with the Leprosy, either of sinfulness or error: for *non est cadentis alium erigere. Plutarch:* It is not for a man that lies in the dirt, to raise up another thence; not for a man that is a sleep in his sins, to awake others from that spiritual sleep of death; That Proverb

remem-

remembred by our Lord, *Physitian heal thy self, Luc.* 4. 23. 18. chiefly appliable to the Physitian of souls, who must begin at home, if he will work any cure upon the Souls of others.

3. But this is not all, for thirdly the Cure of a Pastors soul, is a more difficult task; as being to be perfected in a higher degree, then ordinarily can be expected from any of his Flock: For as our office of Priesthood, is more high, more eminent, more holy, so should our Conversation be, ὅτι ἄγγελοι ἐν ἀνθρώποις.— St. *Chsysostom, De sacerdotio, As Angels above men, as Shepherds above their flock, as Masters above their Scholars, so should a Bishop a Priest a Pastor excel and transcend the people in wholsome doctrine, and holiness of life*: so the great *Gregory, Tantum debet actionem populi, actio transcendere præsulis, quantum distare solet a grege vita Pastoris*,— with much more to the same purpose, *De cura Pastorali*: A book which was once translated by the wisest and greatest of our *Saxon* Prin-

ces: King *Alfred*, and by him commended to the Clergy of this Nation; and a happy Clergy should we be, an holy Priesthood, if the Instructions in that Golden Book, were well observed amongst us.

4. Take heed to your selves and to all the Flock; and both these joyntly and severally. *To your selves*: As to the Innocence and Holiness of your lives, as becometh good Christians: *And to your Flock*, as Shepherds and Guides of souls: Under the Law, the Priests and Prophets of the Lord are frequently called the Angels of the Lord of hosts, *Jud.* 2. 1. *Mal.* 2. 7. And under the Gospel, the Angels of the Church of Christ, 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. *Rev.* 2. 1. 8. 12.— And as we read of the Angels on *Jacobs* Ladder, ascending and descending from heaven, *Gen.* 28. 12. so the Priests of the Lord should first *take heed to themselves* by ascending with the Angels into heaven, having their hearts and affections, their meditation and *Conversation in heaven*,

Phil. 3.

Phil. 3. 20. And withal *take heed to the flock*, by deſcending with the Angels from heaven, enriched with the word of Life, breaking unto them *that bread which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world*, John 6. 33.

But this joynt charge is ſadly diſjoyn'd and perverted, by ſuch as take heed to themſelves indeed, but 'tis not with the Angels to aſcend, but deſcend, only groveling in the duſt, and wallowing in the mire of Luxury, Riot, and Exceſs, Pride and Covetouſneſs, the pomps and vanities of the world, and the ſinful luſts of the fleſh, which every one, even the meaneſt of their Flock, hath ſolemnly abjured, when by holy Baptiſm admitted into the Fold of Chriſt. By ſuch as take heed to themſelves, but 'tis not in a ſpiritual but carnal ſenſe: who will look narrowly to themſelves, as to their worldly concerns, their Revenue and Income; but are to careleſs to the ſpiritual concerns both of themſelves and their Flock, *Who*

ſeek

seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ, Phil. 2. 21. Caring more for their Families at home, then for the Family of Christ, more for their bodily then for their spiritual relations, providing better for their natural heirs, then their spiritual successors in their respective places: And in a word, by all such as mind more the Benefice, then the office, more the Fleece then the Flock: All such do falsly wrest, and wickedly pervert, this double charge of the great Visitor in the Text: *Take heed to your selves and to your Flock*. To your selves, by being examples of holiness to your Flock; And to your Flock; as *Shepherds*, to feed and guide them, as *Fathers* to admonish and reprove them, and as *Mothers* to nourish and cherish them: For these are the four Essentials of a faithful Pastor: *Holiness of life, soundness of Doctrine, Christian courage, Christian Charity*.

5. To *all* the Flock] not to the flock at random, nor to this, or that particular

Sheep,

Sheep; that fawns upon the Shepherd, nor to this, or that Party or Sect, which agrees with his Humours and Opinions, but, *To all the Flock* impartially, and without Hypocrisie, and this first affirmatively, to instruct the Ignorant, to strengthen the weak, to confirm the wavering, to reduce the erroneous, to visit the the sick, to comfort the afflicted, to bind up the broken in heart, to reprove the sinful, and to testify against the stubborn and disobedient: Secondly Negatively, not to break the bruised reed, and quench the smoaking flax, *Mat.* 12. 20. not to sow Pillows under all Armholes, *Ezek.* 13. 18. Not to suffer them to settle with ease, and without reproof, upon the Lees of their sins, and and the errors of their wayes: Not to claw the scabbed Sheep, and scratch the itching ears, not to tickle and foment the petulant humors of the Factious, not to please those squeazy Palates, who nauseate the solid food of Gods publick solemn standing worship, under the pro-

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phane scurrilous name of Porridge, and for no other cause, but because it is like it self, ever the same, constant to it self: Like the Glorious Sun in the Firmament, which shines every day the same; which renders it a worship acceptable, as being herein most agreeable to the Immutable nature of God, *the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning*, Jam. 1. 17. But the Itch after *novelties* in the Flock, and the Itch of *popular applause* or *filthy Lucre* in the Pastor, whilst the one scratches the Itch of the other, Hence the putrid Scabs of *Schism* and *Heresie* in the Church, of *Disobedience* and *Rebellion* in the Kingdome, are engendred,

Against all such sinful Compliance, *Take heed to your selves*, my Brethren take heed to your selves, and to your vows and promises, Sacerdotal and Ecclesiastical, confirmed by your respective Subscriptions to the Articles and Canons of the Church, to the Injunctions

functions of your Metropolitan and Diœcesan, to the Approbation and constant use of the Liturgy of the Church, and of that onely in publick: In which last particular, wherein the greatest part of Ministerial Function consists, I cannot but testifie in this Assembly, so much concern'd therein: *That there is utterly a fault among st us*; In that those divine and excellent Prayers, and heavenly inspired Praises of God, and that ancient and constant way of Gods worship in Publick, is by many too much slighted and neglected, by many irreverently and indevoutly celebrated, by many mangled and maimed, curtail'd, abbreviated, and by the Additions of others implicitly vilified: And generally almost by all secretly undermin'd, enervated and subverted by each mans private prayer in publick: The which private prayer, whether before Sermon, or at any other time in the Congregation, doth not onely secretly imply a defect in the Publick

Prayers of the Church, which must (forsooth) be supplyed by mens private conceived prayers; but also, 'tis a disorder and confusion in the service of God; for thus publick and private prayer are confounded, which our Lord Christ hath distinguished and commanded to be seperately observed, to avoid Hypocrisie and vain-glory limiting private Prayer to the private Closet, *Mat.* 6. 5, 6. and for avoiding Taurologies and impertinent bablings after the manner of the heathen, he prescribes a set form to be us'd in publick, *vers.* 8, 9. We are commanded when we call upon the Lord, to pay our vows to the most High, and then he will hear, *Psal.* 50. 14. But can any man think it probable, that God will hear their Prayers, who sacrilegiously break their vows when they pray, by praying otherwise then they have vowed and promised? those promises also being agreeable to the Commands of Christ, and the orders of his Church?

And

And this undoubtedly amongst many others, is not the least cause, of so many stray and wandring Sheep in every Flock, of so many giddy headed and factious minded men in every Congregation, of so many seperate Congregations or Conventicles in every Parish; one great cause hereof is the falshood and treachery of the Shepherds, who in compliance with the noxious humors of the diseased part of their Flock, take no heed to themselves, nor to the vows and promises they have made in order to the right and regular execution of their Function, in feeding of their Flock: so for the iniquity and irregular carriage of the Priests, the sons of *Eli* in the sacrifices of the Temple, *Men abhorred the offering of the Lord.* 1 Sam. 2. 17.

6. But should not the Flock take heed to the Shepherd, as well as the Shepherd to the Flock? The duty of the one to the other (undoubtedly) is reciprocal, and the mutual Relation

respectively binding. *Take heed to thy said* (said the Lord to his people) *that thou forsake not the Levite, as long as thou livest upon the earth.* Deut. 12. 19. and Chap. 14. 27. Eccl. 7. 30. There is nothing more plainly asserted and more punctually commanded in the book of God, then that the people should take heed to their Priests, the flock to their Shepherds, especially such as are Orthodox and holy, that they should hear and obey their voice, and make their Application and recourse unto them, in all cases of ignorance or doubting: *For the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they* (the people) *should seek the Law at his mouth, for he is the messenger* (or the Angel) *of the Lord of Hosts.* Mal. 2. 7. *Hæc sunt initia hæreticorum, ut sibi placeant, & præpositum superbo tumore contemnant;* Cypr. *lib.* 3. *Epist. ad Florent.* Hence the Rise of Hereticks in the Church, when the people swelling with presumption of their own knowledge, and pleasing themselves in their fancies

and

and opinions proudly neglect and scorn to submit to their directions, whom the Lord hath appointed to be their Shepherds and Guides of their Souls: And thus even thus, the people of God fell into Idolatry, even that grosse and infamous Idolatry of the Golden Calf, when slighting *Moses*, and overawing *Aaron* the high Priest, they commanded him, who should have commanded them, saying, *Make us God to go before us, for as for this man* Moses, *we wot not what is become of him*, Numb. 22. 1.

When the same people were weary of the Government of *Samuel* the Prophet, and desired a King, the Lord said unto *Samuel*, *They have not despised thee, but they have despised me*, 1 Sam. 8. 7. Whereupon St. *Gregory*: *Quam reverendi sunt Pastores optimi Sanctæ Ecclesiæ*—how reverendly to be esteemed are the Pastors of holy Church, who whilst they faithfully serve the Lord in the Execution of their function, they are so closely joyn'd unto him in the bond of love,

that

that the least slight, disesteem or neglect, that is cast upon them, the Lord takes it as an injury to himself: So said the Lord to his Apostles, and in them to their Successors: *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me,* Luc. 10. 16. And this duty, that the people should take heed to their Priests, is commanded under a severe penalty, *Deut.* 17. 8. *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in Judgment, thou shalt arise and come unto the Priests, the Levites, and that man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest, that standeth to Minister—— even that man shall dye.* And under the Gospel also the same command is given, *Heb.* 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your Souls,*

But notwithstanding these and many more commands, in the sacred sheets of either Testament, yet is this Christian duty slighted and generally omitted, and

and especially by those who pretend most to the sole Authority of the holy Scriptures, without any Relation to the doctrine and Authority of the Church in the Interpretation thereof: There being many amongst us in every Flock, who presume to direct their Shepherds, guide their Guides, and teach their Teachers; who if they teach not, preach not, pray not, as they would have them, and consonant to their humors and opinions; they will censure their doctrines, contemn their directions, revile their persons, scandalize their profession, and even snatch the holy Oracles out of their mouths, and separate themselves into Conventicles, where *they may heap to themselves Teachers after their lusts, having itching ears, and they turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables*: believing and delighting in lies, and vain empty prophesyings which profit not, as was foretold of such, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4.

And having mentioned Conventicles,

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I cannot but add a word of the danger of them, not so much in order to the disturbance of the peace of the Nation, leaving that to the Secular Magistrate, but in order to the seduction of unwary and unstable souls into falshood and errors in Religion; *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that entereth not in by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber*, Joh. 10. 1. 'Tis the practice of subtile thieves when they seize on the honest Traveller to drag him out of the high road-way into hedges and by-places, the more securely and without interruption to robb and spoil him; so the spiritual thieves, false Prophets, ringleaders of faction and sedition, do more easily seduce, and robb poor silly men and women of the inestimable treasures of truth and obedience, by drawing them from the open and Publick Assemblies of Gods people in his houses of prayer, into By-places and lone houses, where they may more securely breath forth the spiritual Infections

sections, sow the seeds of Schism and Sedition, and whisper their irreligious Treasons, under the mask of Religion. In such places they may to their advantage vent and put off their counterfeit ware, their false glosses, and misinterpretations of holy Writ, and make their Apocryphal Comments upon Canonical Scripture, making the Holy Word of God to speak not what the Spirit of God intends therein, but what their factious spirits and wild fancies would have it: That there should be such false Prophets in desart places and private houses, our Lord hath foretold, commanding all his disciples not to believe or follow them, *Mat.* 24. 26. *Wherefore if they should say unto you he is in the desart, go not forth; behold he is in the secret chamber, believe it not.* St. *Augustine* observes of the man that fell among thieves, and was robbed and wounded, *Luc.* 10. 30. *Si non descendisset.* If he had not been *going down from Jerusalem*, the place of Gods Temple, *to Jericho* a prophane and common place,

he had escaped that sad disaster. To teach all people to beware how they leave the place *which God hath chosen to put his name there* the Temple and house of God, to convene in any *common or prophane* By places, under pretence of Religion, and the performance of holy duties in such places: 'Twas otherwise with the man after Gods own heart, *Psa.* 5. 7. *As for me I will come into thine house even upon the multitude of thy mercies, and in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy Temple.* And with him resolves the whole body of Gods people, *Psal* 132. 7. *We will go into his tabernacle, and fall low on our knees before his footstool:* And not only this under the Law, but under the Gospel, *Mark* 11. 17. *My house* (not the houses of men *shall be called the house of Prayer of all Nations:* Not of the Jews as under the Law, but of the Gentiles also under the Gospel, and 'tis there especially in Gods own house, that he has promised to meet his people, to be in the midst of them, to hear their prayers and bless them. To teach them his waies by

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his faithful and true Pastors, and there (in a word) to dispence all the blessed means of grace and salvation to them, *Deuteron.* 12. 5, 6. 11, 12, 13, 14. 1 *Kin.* 8. 29. 30. *Mat.* 18. 20. *Luk.* 19. 46. 1 *Cor.* 11. 26.

7. But the grand excuse of the wandring sheep, and the cry of many Orthodox also, is, *The division of the Shepheards*, who being divided amongst themselves, do lead their flocks into several divided wayes of divine worship: And the generality of the flock being not wise enough to know what way to take, or whom most securely to follow, they hereupon *heap to themselves Teachers after their own Lusts*, and with the Schismatical *Corinthians* 1 *Ep.* 1 *cap.* 12. *vers. Every one saith, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ*, one man, or Sect of men, liking this mans way of preaching and praying, another another's way, and others none at all, but independently rely upon the immediate teaching of Christ by his Spirit. And thus Sects and Divisions are multiplied.

This complaint is too true, and such sad effects thereof too evident, and if not stopt will prove bitterness in the end.

But would you know who be these divided Pastors or Preachers, or Sect-masters rather, the corrupt springs from whom all our polluted streams of divisions flow? They are such (in a word) as first divide from the Church of Christ in general (wherein they all agree) and then divide amongst themselves, into particular Sects, and Factions, wherein they all differ: There is *but one body and one spirit*, Eph. 4. 4. one mystical body of Christ, which is his Church, and one spirit of truth, quickning this is our body, and its members, and them onely: And as it follows, *One Lord, one faith, one baptisme, one God and father of all, who is above all, through all, and in you all*, vers. 5, 6. *In you all*, that are members of this one body, and quickned with this one spirit, *and endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*, which is the duty enforced from

from the premisses, *vers.* 3. Contrariwise then such, that divide from this *one body* the Church, into several Sects and Factions, and (which necessarily follows) such are not quickned with this *one Spirit*, but each *with the foolish Prophets follow their own spirit*, Ezek 13. 3. which the mistake and misterm the Spirit of God: such as worship not this *one Lord*, as we are all commanded, with *one mouth* and with *one mind*, Rom 15, 6. Such as hold not the Articles of this *one faith*, with one joynt unanimous consent of truth; *Unto the unity of which faith, till we all come, we cannot be perfect men in Christ Jesus: but are like children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.* Eph. 4. 13, 14. Such are all false Prophets, treacherous Shepherds, or in the Language of Saint *Paul*, 2 Corin. 11. 13, 14. *Such are all false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light:* I may call them according to the metaphor of the text,

The

The Bellweathers of the Flock, the Ringleaders of those numerous Sects, and daily increasing divisions amongst us.

And although each sect and division must necessarily be false and erroneous, because there is but one Truth, and one true way of Divine worship, which is ever constant to it self, yet hath each division it numerous followers of the divided Flock: as silly sheep when a gap is opened, follow one another to the breach to stray from their Pasture: So flock the people (if not restrained) into the ways of division and error, if any Sect-master but open a gap, and lead them the by ways of straying from the Sheepfold of Christ, which is his Church. For such alas, is the sad condition of mans corrupted and depraved mind, as naturally to be more affected with error, then with the Truth; more prone to believe lies, and more zealous in the maintenance of falshood, then to believe and maintain the Truth: 'Twas ever so; *When the Prophets prophesie falsly,*

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the people love to have it so, Jer. 5. *ult.* but a sad question follows, *What will ye do in the end thereof?* When the Prophets prophesie Lies, or (which is the same) do make and foment divisions, and the people withal are affected with their lying prophesies, and side with them in their respective divisions: 'tis easie then to prophesie and foretell the end thereof to be ruine and confusion: *If a kingdom be divided against it self, that kingdom cannot stand, and if a house be divided against it self, that house cannot stand,* Mat. 3. 24, 25. Not the house of God, not the family of Christ, in what Kingdom and Nation soever established: All the Kingdoms and Nations in Christendom, ancient and modern, from the first to these last and worst of times, have felt, by sad experience, the bitter effects of divisions and errors in Religion; and none more than our own, so lately bleeding, even to the last gasp of death, and almost buryed in her own confusions; which took beginning from the prophesying of Lies, and overspreading of mistakes

takes and errors in Religion, sowing the Seeds of Schism, Faction and Sedition, in separate and divided meetings, or Conventicles in private; joyned with a sacrilegious vow-breaking performance of holy duties in Publick. All which now are as much, if not more practised then ever; some of whose Factors and Followers do really *intend*, all do certainly *tend* to involve this Church and Kingdom, into the sad condition of intestine war, blood and Confusion, from whence by the great mercy of God, we so lately escaped.

And now to you, the Reverend persons, who are come to visit us in our distempers and infirmities, to you it belongs, as much as in you lies, to give stop to our overflowing divisions: To restrain our licentious exorbitancies, both in doctrine and practice, in Praying and Preaching, and this, whether in the house of God, or in the houses of men: *Et fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.*

FINIS.